Projected Works, &c.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders, by 31st May, for the erection of baths and washhouses at Hull; by 28th inst., for the erection of a sea wall at East Bourne, Kent: for the erection and finishing of a third-rate house at Dalston; by 29th, for the formation of a reservoir and other works at Chew Magna; by 25th, for taking down and rebuilding a chapel and schools, &c., at Southampton; by 24th, for the erection of new boundary walls to a new burying-ground at Cambridge: by 25th, for the erection of a brick tank and a gasholder at Hastings; by 29th, for paving footpaths and gutters and laying down kerbing at Birmingham (materials exclusive or inclusive); by 29th, for building a sewer of 190 yards and making six gully shoots at Birmingham; and by 25th May, for the erection of a new Union Workhouse at Bridgnorth, for 200 inmates.

Electro-bronzing Metals.—For some time the means of depositing a layer of brass or bronze on metals by means of the galvanic battery has been known in France, but the process was expensive. A solution for the purpose has been lately proposed to the Paris Academy of Science, which would have the effect of cheapening the operation. It consists of a solution in water of 500 parts of carbonate of potash, 20 of chloride of copper, 40 of sulphate of zinc, and 250 of nitrate of ammonia. To produce bronze, a salt of tin is substituted for the sulphate of zinc. By means of these solutions, it is said they can readily cover with a coating of bronze cast or wrought iron, steel, lead, zinc, tin, and alloys of these metals with one another, or with bismuth and antimony, after a previous cleaning, according to the nature of the metal. The operation is conducted with a cold solution. The metal to be coated is placed in connection with the negative pole of a Bunsen battery; a plate of brass or of bronze being employed at the positive pole. When the objects have been covered with a coating of the metal desired, and have received their proper colour, they will be found, it is stated, to rival the finest bronzes.

Modern Bricklayers: Building Brick Columns.—Some observations on modern bricklayers which appeared a short time since in our pages, with remarks on the use of cement, &c., brought us a number of indignant disclaimers from working men. Our correspondents may each and all be gratifying exceptions to a general rule, but the fact of a decay of skill amongst bricklayers is incontrovertible, and the causes are evident. We had many letters too on building brick columns, but could not render them available, and suggestions out of number for those at the Euston-square station. One recommended the use of an iron core in each column, which did not seem to us very advantageous; if we are rightly informed, however, this course is now being pursued there.

Rate of Houses, under Buildings' Act.—I wish, through the medium of your journal, to call the attention of the proper authorities to an inconsistency in the present Buildings' Act, which also existed in the former one. I allude to the taking of the whole of an external wall into the superficial measurement, when ascertaining rate of house, instead of a part of the thickness only. To make my objection understood, I will take the case of a person building two full-sized fourth-rate houses at the end of a row: he is, in nine cases out of ten, obliged by the Buildings' Act to make his external or flank wall 4 inches thicker than his party-wall for one story extra in height, thereby putting himself to additional expense, and yet the house being 9 inches smaller inside is worth, in reality, more than the extra outlay less than the house adjoining. Now I would suggest to those who are about framing a new Act, or an alteration of the present one, the propriety of allowing the external, or end house, to be as large interiorly as the one adjoining. I have mentioned this to one of the most experienced district surveyors of the day, who quite agreed with my views, and I hope, by your finding a corner for this in your journal, that it will enable the public to have the benefit of the alteration without any detriment to the stability of such houses, of which there are a great many.

Charles Newnham.

Amendment of the Patent Laws.—It is only those who have had practical experience of the whole working of the patent laws of this country, from the taking out of the patent to a trial in the Court of Exchequer or Chancery, who can form a correct opinion of the miserable state of these laws. Day after day our Attorney and Solicitor Generals grant patents which ought never to be granted, and they pocket their fees. During the last three years, if we are rightly informed, patents were granted for England, Scotland, and Ireland—

884 ..	in 1845, at a cost of	£120,000
768	1846	93,000
753	1847	91,000
2405		304,000

2,400 patents in three years! 2,000 loads of rubbish deposited in the Court of Chancery! Mr. Newall, of Gateshead-upon-Tyne has published a proposal which seeks not merely to amend these laws, but to encourage arts, sciences, and manufactures, by making use of the fees derived from patents (after paying expenses) as rewards. The main feature of Mr. Newall's remedy for some of the evils of the present system is the appointment of a standing commission, to whom petitions and specifications will be submitted for examination *before* the patent is granted. This he thinks would probably reduce the number of patents granted to one-half, for he believes that more than one-half of those now granted are totally *impracticable* and useless; whilst a much smaller proportion ever benefits the patentees.

Artists' Benevolent Institution.—Our readers will have learnt from an advertisement, that a second amateur dramatic performance, by artists, will be given on Thursday evening, the 27th inst., at the St. James's Theatre, for the benefit of the Artists' General Benevolent Institution; we sincerely hope it will realize the wishes of those who projected it. The general committee includes the names of Mr. Cockerell, R.A., Mr. Landseer, R.A., Sir W. Ross, R.A., Mr. Wyon, R.A., Mr. Uwins, R.A., Mr. Barry, R.A., Mr. Hardwick, R.A., Mr. Wyse, Sir W. Newton, Mr. S. C. Hall, Mr. Macready, Mr. Planché, Mr. Lewis Pocock, and many others. Amongst those who will take part in the dramatic arrangements are Mr. Geo. Cruikshank, Mr. Hamerton, Mr. Holl, Mr. Mclan, Mr. Redgrave, Mr. Tenniel, Mr. Topham, Mr. J. Wilson, Jun., &c. &c.

Fall of a New House.—Last week the front and return of a corner house intended for a shop, in Bond-street, Chelsea, fell in and seriously injured two of the workmen. There was a bressummer in both fronts carried on story-posts, leaving a space at the angle for the entrance,—a customary but dangerous arrangement. The story-posts were on stone plinths, not a continued cill, and the wall below is supposed to have bulged and yielded.

School of Design, Somerset House.—Mr. R. W. Billings lectured here on Friday evening, in last week, on Gothic tracery, a subject of which he is completely master.

Gloucester Cathedral.—The editor of the *Gloucester Chronicle* makes the following judicious remarks as to this building:—"The choir is one of the finest examples of the Perpendicular style in its palmy days; and boasts of an east window which is unrivalled in England in point of size. Extraordinary breadth has been given to this magnificent window by a skilful architectural contrivance. Unfortunately, however, the effect of the east end of the choir is sadly marred by the modern screen which was placed there during an era of bad taste. How truly exquisite would be the perspective of the lady chapel if this screen were removed; how great the additional dignity of the glorious east window of the choir! We respectfully urge the Chapter to consider the matter. How often do aspirations for the restoration of the whole cathedral cross the mind of beholders! The vastness of the cost apparently renders the attainment of such an object insuperable, yet some now living may see it done. A fine building is an educator of the people—it tends to refine their thoughts—to excite reverential feeling. The man who can enter the sacred and time-hallowed walls of a great church—aye, of the humblest church in our land—without feeling for the moment less worldly than haply he is, must be dead indeed to thoughts of a future."

Railway Jottings.—A correspondent of the *Birmingham Journal* describes the raising of the Conway tube 14 feet by means of the hydraulic press. The rate of raising, he says, was 12 feet an hour (weight 1,300 tons). The quantity of water required for a lift of 6 feet, or one stroke of the press, was 70 gallons. The clamping of the chains and attendance to the engines, &c., occupied ten men. Another newspaper paragraph states, that having been fixed in its place, the first train passed through it on Tuesday with a party of Directors.——The cofferdam and the wharfs for the docks at Grimsby, connected with the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire line, are nearly completed.

Pulpits in America.—The octagonal, or the six-sided pulpit, the most convenient and handsome form, where (as in most English churches) an elevated pulpit is needed, has long disappeared in the United States, except from a few of the older churches; and the rage for something new has brought up a countless variety of preaching boxes, all differing from each other in size and decorations, but maintaining a wondrous resemblance in their uniform ugliness, and the luxurious accommodation afforded to the preacher. An English friend of mine entering St. Andrew's Church, Philadelphia, for the first time, in which one of these architectural anomalies rears its cumbrous and tasteless form in the chancel, supposed it to be a high altar, richly and gorgeously decorated (which illusion the candlestick, or lamps for gas burners resembling candlesticks at the top, render complete), till the sermon, when—as he was speculating what place the preacher would occupy, no pulpit (like one) being in view—his appearance at the summit of the supposed altar produced the strangest effect imaginable. Several pulpits in which I preached in the same city form a complete saloon, where the easy couch, the mellowed light, and partial seclusion, invite to soft repose. In others, the hanging drapery and festooned canopy impart to them the appearance of a royal throne. In this particular our American brethren might, with great advantage, copy the more becoming English example.—*Waylin's Reminiscences.*

Cistern for Cleansing Drains.—A correspondent says—Why not have a syphon in the small cistern proposed by your last week's correspondent, for making the waste water available for cleansing drains, so that whenever the water reached the level of the bend in the syphon it would discharge into the drain upon the principle of the toy called Tantalus's cup?

Smoke Nuisance.—A bill similar to the one which all but passed two years ago, has been brought before the House of Lords by Lord Redesdale, and read a first time.

Smoky Chimneys! Smoky Chimneys!—Letter after letter reaches us on this universally interesting subject (the emancipation of the blacks was not more important than our own emancipation *from* blacks), but they contain little that is sound, and less that is new. Some of the letters are all puff, a new pot being the subject, and others so cloudy that there is no seeing through them. The subject still wants the *right man*.

At the Institute of Fine-Arts, a meeting of artists was held on Wednesday evening, when it was resolved to petition Parliament not to allow any mistaken or ill-judged ideas of economy in mere time or money, to interfere with the full development of the ideas of Mr. Barry, in the perfect completion of so great and national a work as the Houses of Parliament, especially as the perfect accomplishment of such a design is calculated to influence materially the arts of our country; while the petitioners are assured that a nation, so wealthy and so wisely liberal as Great Britain, will never find fault with an expenditure which is for the lasting glory of the country, as well as for the encouragement of the Fine Arts, on our attainments in which depends the perfection of our manufactures.

Query in Geometry.—Sir: Will one of your correspondents give me a rule by which the following figure may be constructed? On the ends of a given line to construct two lines that will intersect a line so as to make it equal with them in length, the line being parallel to the given line, and also at a given distance from it. C. B. R.

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